Government of
Saskatchewan

2006 – 2007
Annual Report

Saskatchewan
Learning

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Letters of Transmittal

Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning

His Honour the Honourable Dr. Gordon Barnhart
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

May it Please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Department of Learning for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2007.

Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning

The Honourable Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Learning for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2007.

Wynne Young
Deputy Minister of Learning

Introduction

The Saskatchewan Learning 2006-07 Annual Report presents actual progress and results with regard to the key actions and performance measures as published in the 2006-08 Saskatchewan Learning Performance Plan which can be found on the Department's website at www.learning.gov.sk.ca/admin/pub_pdf/Learning_plan07_08.pdf. Results associated with key actions included in the Budget and Performance Plan Summary for 2006-07, are available at www.gov.sk.ca/finance/budget/budget06/budgetsummary.pdf .

On April 1, 2006 the new Department of Learning was created, separating the responsibilities for Prekindergarten to Grade 12 (PreK-12) and libraries, and post-secondary education, into two departments. On that same date, responsibility for early learning and child care was transferred from the Department of Community Resources to the Department of Learning. This is the first time the new Department of Learning has reported results associated with a performance plan.

Reporting on actual year-end results achieved, both financial and performance, as compared to the performance plan released at the beginning of the year, increases government's accountability to the public. Improvements in this Annual Report are a result of continued implementation of the provincial government's system of planning, measuring and reporting.

Due to the timing of the Department reorganization, the 2006-07 Plan was incorporated into the 2007-08 Performance Plan. This two-year plan was released with the 2007-08 budget on March 22, 2007.

Please note: In this document, "First Nations and Métis" refers to those individuals who self-identify as Treaty/Registered (Status) Indian, Non-Status Indian, Inuit, or Métis, and who participate in the off-reserve education system, unless otherwise indicated.

Who We Are

The mandate of the Department is to provide leadership in the development and operation of early learning and child care, kindergarten through grade twelve education, enhancement of literacy for all Saskatchewan people, and support for provincial library services. Through its leadership, the Department responds to the learning and developmental needs of Saskatchewan children and youth.

Services are provided by approximately 342 staff with headquarters in Regina and regional offices located in communities throughout the province.

In February 2006, the Premier announced changes to Saskatchewan Learning that became effective April 1, 2006. The Department of Learning continues to be responsible for PreK-12 education, province-wide library services, and literacy programming under the purview of the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission (www.learning.gov.sk.ca/sasksmart/), with the addition of early learning and child care from the Department of Community Resources. April 1, 2006 also saw the post-secondary education and training programs and services moved from Saskatchewan Learning to the new Department of Advanced Education and Employment. See Appendix A for the Department's organizational chart.

In supporting approximately 1,900 children in Prekindergarten programs, 8,100 children in licensed child care spaces, 600 children and their families in Early Childhood Intervention Programs, 174,000 students in provincially-funded and independent schools, as well as 540,000 library patrons (registered borrowers within public library systems), the Department:

- provides program and policy support to the delivery of early learning and child care services, PreK-12 learning programs, French education, library services, and other education initiatives and priorities of the provincial government; and
- engages local, regional and provincial boards of community volunteers and/or education representatives in governance of 759 schools in 28 school divisions, 119 Prekindergarten programs, 454 licensed child care facilities, 15 Early Childhood Intervention Programs, and 320 public libraries in 10 public library systems.

There are a variety of relationships between the Department and the institutions, agencies, boards, and organizations that comprise the early learning and child care, library, and PreK-12 learning sector. These relationships vary by degree of accountability and are described in Acts and Regulations (listed in Appendix B), orders in council, and memorandums of understanding.

Early Learning and Child Care

In 2006, Saskatchewan became the first jurisdiction in Canada to focus responsibility for early learning and child care services within a single education ministry, Saskatchewan Learning. The Early Learning and Child Care Branch provides integrated program and policy support to licensed child care and Prekindergarten programs, while co-ordinating the broad early learning and child care agenda, which is a key priority for the provincial government.

The *KidsFirst* program fosters a community-based network of supports and services that focuses on the healthy growth and development of children and supports their families. It is a component of the overall Early Childhood Development Strategy and responsibility is shared by the departments of Learning and Health. The Early Childhood Development Unit of Saskatchewan Learning releases its own performance plan and annual report that can be found at www.learning.gov.sk.ca/admin/pub_press.shtml.

Prekindergarten to Grade 12

The Department of Learning establishes policies, provides programs and supports, and ensures legislation or regulations that enable high-quality Prekindergarten programs and K-12 education for Saskatchewan students. The Department certifies teachers, develops curriculum and instructional practices to be used in schools, regulates independent schools and home-based education, distributes provincial funding and capital grants to school divisions, and legislates the structure and boundaries of school divisions.

The Department's work in the PreK-12 sector is guided by ongoing collaboration with partners that

include: the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents; Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials; Saskatchewan School Boards Association; Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

Public Libraries

The Department of Learning supports the development of a progressive province-wide public library system to ensure equitable access for lifelong learning and global information for Saskatchewan residents. As legislated, the Provincial Library co-ordinates the development of public library policies, protocols, and standards for province-wide services and is accountable for the development of a province-wide electronic library network which provides citizens with a library and information infrastructure. In order to achieve these, the Provincial Library consults with the ten public library systems which provide direct services to the public and are responsible for the operation of local libraries. The Provincial Library also supports the development of a multitype library system by supporting the Multitype Library Board and its strategic plan, programs, and services.

2006-07 Results at a Glance

Summary of Performance Results

The learning sector has a profound impact on the social and economic well-being of the province. Throughout this Report, references to the learning sector include Saskatchewan Learning and its partners in:

- early learning and child care;
- the PreK-12 school system;
- the public library system; and
- literacy.

Highlights of Department activities for 2006-07 are listed below, followed by a summary of the Department's financial results.

Goal 1 – Learners Succeed

- Implemented a number of elements of our made-in-Saskatchewan early learning and child care plan, including 250 new child care spaces and 15 targeted Prekindergarten programs. High quality early learning and child care services contribute to healthy child development and improved learning outcomes.
- Supported school divisions in implementing the Continuous Improvement Framework to prepare them for the planning and reporting of learner outcomes which is a primary requirement of the Framework.
- Expanded the provincial Assessment for Learning program, which provides valuable data to teachers about how their own students are performing which, in turn, empowers them to make the necessary changes to improve their students' outcomes.
- Provided funding to the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission, to support family and adult literacy programming throughout the province.
- Developed the *Caring and Respectful Schools: Bullying Prevention: A Model Policy* to assist school divisions in developing or strengthening their policies and practices to prevent bullying. If students feel safe and respected in school it is expected their ability to learn will improve.
- Throughout the curriculum renewal process, First Nations and Métis content, perspectives, and ways of knowing are being incorporated into the learning program. This is for the benefit of all learners, but it is expected this will particularly impact upon the learning outcomes of First Nations and Métis students.

Goal 2 – Highly Responsive and Accountable Learning System

- A number of changes were made to the K-12 Operating Grant formula during 2006-07, for implementation effective April 1, 2007, resulting in a simpler, more transparent, and more equitable funding system. Additional accountability is required around outcomes, particularly related to student achievement, through the Continuous Improvement Framework.
- In response to requests from taxpayers, the Education Property Tax Relief program provided a 38 per cent credit on agricultural property and an eight per cent credit for non-agricultural (residential and commercial) property, with a $2,500 cap on the credit for commercial property.
- Additional funding was provided to improve the learning environment in PreK-12 schools, and to cover construction inflation costs.

Summary of Financial Results

Total 2006/07 actual expenditures for the Department were $977 million resulting in a variance of $72 million in excess expenditures over the budget of $905 million. There was an over expenditure of $30 million in non-statutory expenditures and $42 million in statutory expenditures.

The non-statutory variance of $30 million primarily reflects approved funding for PreK-12 capital of $37.473 million. This is offset by an under expenditure of ($1.396 million) in School Operating, ($0.5 million) in Debenture Interest Payments, ($1.55 million) in Education Property Tax Relief, ($0.4 million) in the Teachers' Dental Plan, ($2.9 million) in the Teachers' Extended Health Plan, and Child Care Facilities are under expended by ($1.389 million) due to a combination of late start-up in the development of new child care spaces and the realignment of $0.774 million in funding to *KidsFirst*.

The statutory over expenditure of $42 million was largely the result of the Teachers' Superannuation Plan exceeding budget by $44 million due to fewer teachers retiring than anticipated, thus increasing the statutory funding requirement. This was offset by an under expenditure of ($2 million) in lower than anticipated employer matching contributions required for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Retirement Plan.

Revenue for the Department was $8.621 million, an excess of $1.034 million over the net budgeted $7.587 million. The increase was primarily due to new federal funding for the Office of French Language Coordination ($0.383 million) and for capital projects in Saskatoon ($1 million). This was offset by a transfer of revenue to the Student Aid Fund to administer bursaries under the Official Language in Education Agreement ($0.282 million) and less federal funding for the public library systems' Community Access Program ($0.121 million).

2006-07 Performance Results

The learning sector, including the Department of Learning, responded to a number of challenges in 2006-07:

- Effective January 1, 2006 more than 80 school divisions were restructured into 28 school divisions. This restructuring primarily impacted on departmental activities beginning in 2006-07.
- The Cabinet realignment announced by the Premier on February 3, 2006 came into effect on April 1, 2006. The new Department of Learning retained responsibility for PreK-12 education, the Provincial Library, and the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission, and responsibility for early learning and child care was transferred to the new Department (from the Department of Community Resources). Post-secondary education and training programs and services were transferred to the new Department of Advanced Education and Employment. These fundamental system changes will give our children the best start in life by creating a unique blended approach to child care and the educational development needs of all children.

It is anticipated that results achieved in 2006-07 will positively impact the Department's ability to achieve its long-term goals. For example, by increasing the percentage of students included in the Student Data System, children and youth who are at risk of leaving school can be identified and supported. It is expected this would lead to those students successfully transitioning both within and from the PreK-12 system (either to employment or further education), thereby achieving the goal of Learners Succeed.

Performance information is used to assess overall progress towards goals and objectives, and to inform or guide future plans and actions of the Department and the sector. For example, the need to improve learner outcomes resulted in the development of the Continuous Improvement Framework which is an accountability framework requiring school divisions to report to the Department, and their communities, on student achievement outcomes and future improvement plans.

The key actions originally presented in our 2006-07 Performance Plan are listed below, followed by a report on actual progress for each. Actual results information is included for all key actions and performance measures that were published in our 2006-08 Performance Plan, as well as for all commitments related to Learning in the government-wide 2006-07 Performance Plan Summary. Further information about the performance measures is available in the Department's 2006-08 Performance Plan at www.learning.gov.sk.ca/admin/pub_pdf/Learning_plan07_08.pdf.

Goal 1: Learners Succeed

Objective 1: Improve children's readiness to learn

"Readiness to learn" is a broad concept that includes physical, social and emotional well-being, cognitive readiness, and openness to learning. Many studies demonstrate that preschool children who attend high-quality early childhood education and child care programs have a greater likelihood of success in school and of becoming productive, contributing members of society as adults.

Early childhood development is an important component of lifelong learning, and in improving the long-term social and economic prospects of our province.

Government has publicly committed to moving ahead with our made-in-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care plan. Despite the federal government phasing out the previous government's Agreement-in-Principle, which was to provide substantial federal funding for early learning and child care for five years, the Department has made progress in achieving this objective in 2006-07.

Key Results

- Develop and implement an *Early Learning Program Guide* to support learning opportunities for three- and four-year-olds in all settings (e.g., Prekindergarten, child care centres and homes, preschools). Implementation will include:
  - distribution (print and on-line) of the Guide;
  - conducting face-to-face workshops; and
  - creating web-based professional development and an interactive CD.

  [2006-07 planned result]

- A draft of the Guide was completed by March 31, 2007 having incorporated a substantial amount of input from a wide range of partners and from a field review process. Document finalization and planning for the implementation phase began early in 2007-08. It is expected that the Guide will be available, in print and online, in the 2007-08 fiscal year, complemented by professional development supports such as workshops and an interactive CD. These activities will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Create a common understanding of the early learning and child care measurement tools currently used within the province, and determine the approach for Saskatchewan in measuring the impact of investment in early learning and child care. [2006-07 planned result]

  - In 2006-07, partnering with the Canadian Council on Learning, the Department developed a plan for a provincial educational event, to be held in Regina in September 2007, to create a common understanding of the early learning and child care measurement tools currently available. The tools to be examined are the *Early Development Instrument; the Early Years Evaluation Tool; the Ages and Stages Questionnaire; the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social/Emotional*. The National Longitudinal Study on Children and Youth (NLSCY) will also be reviewed to assist with this activity. The NLSCY is a Statistics Canada study that began in 1994, which tracks the progress of the child and youth cohort on a biannual basis.

- Examine the development of an integrated Early Learning and Child Care information management system in conjunction with the Department of Community Resources and the Business Advisory Committee of the Information Technology Office. [2006-07 planned result]

  - Part one of the business case for a new Early Learning and Child Care information management system was completed and the Departments of Learning and Community Resources are now working on part two in conjunction with the Information Technology Office. Research was done to explore existing government systems, packaged software currently available, and custom development options. The Vision document and detailed business requirements of the system have been developed and the decision made to proceed with a Request for Information to explore potential of existing solutions.

- Provide additional funding for 30 targeted Prekindergarten programs for a total of 134 across the province by March 31, 2008. [2006-07 planned result]

  - New funding for 15 Prekindergarten programs was provided in 2006-07. Approximately 200 children and their families benefited from this programming. An additional 15 programs are expected to be implemented in 2007-08 and will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

Measurement Results

Number of targeted Prekindergarten programs funded by Saskatchewan Learning, including number of children impacted.

September 1, 1997: 26 (416 children) (baseline)
September 1, 2002: 89 (1,424 children)
September 1, 2003: 104 (1,664 children)
September 1, 2004: 104 (1,664 children)
September 1, 2005: 104 (1,664 children)
September 1, 2006: 119 (1,904 children)

(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, 2007-08 K-12 Operating Grant Funding Policy Manual)

Prekindergarten is targeted to vulnerable three- and four-year-olds, and supports enhanced programming. The Department's Prekindergarten program was established in 1996-97, in partnership with school divisions that participate in the Community Schools Program. Since that time, the Program has expanded to additional communities based on socio-economic and other community or family needs.

This measure reflects the Department's commitment to assisting vulnerable children to

achieve success in their learning experience.

Objective 2: Improve learning outcomes of all learners

The Department is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners based on their own needs, interests, aptitudes, and abilities. Positive outcomes would include, but not be limited to: academic achievement; social, cultural, and emotional well-being; employability skills; and ability to contribute positively to family, community, and society as a whole.

Student learning outcomes are increasingly important for all of us – students, parents, families, general public, teachers, administrators, labour market – to consider. Large-scale assessments of student learning reveal that Saskatchewan students are not achieving at the desired levels compared to their Canadian counterparts.

The Department made good progress in initial implementation of the Continuous Improvement Framework. This initiative provides the PreK-12 education system with the first common strategic planning and accountability mechanism that will both enhance operational accountability across school divisions, and improve student learning outcomes for all Saskatchewan students. It is an approach that measures not just graduation rates, but the skill sets students need to thrive and succeed in tomorrow's world.

As well, the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission, which has a broad mandate for literacy development across the life spectrum in all informal and non-formal education settings, made good progress in addressing the needs of those Saskatchewan residents who have serious literacy challenges.

Key Results

- Implement the Continuous Improvement Framework (CIF) in K-12 school divisions by supporting school divisions in the planning, monitoring, and reporting of learner outcomes. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ The CIF establishes an annual planning, monitoring, and reporting cycle that aligns provincial and local priorities to improve system operations and learner outcomes.

  Consultation meetings with all 28 school divisions in the province to discuss the planning and reporting cycle of the CIF confirmed that all have adopted the Framework as a key component in their strategic planning processes.

  The Department contracted with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association to develop an electronic template to support reporting by local School Community Councils. This template will be distributed in November 2007.

- Expand the Assessment for Learning (AFL) program to provide a broader set of division and school-specific data to inform planning, monitoring, and reporting processes undertaken by school divisions with a focus on improving student learning outcomes. Specifically:

  - administer two large-scale assessments per year (increased from one per year); and
  - begin broadening the AFL program from math and reading (pilot) to include writing, science, personal and social skill development. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ An expanded Assessment for Learning schedule has been formally communicated to school divisions. These assessments will test students' opportunity-to-learn and achievement outcomes in:

  - grades 5 and 8 mathematics and Math 20 every two years, beginning in 2007;
  - grades 4, 7 and 10 reading every two years beginning in 2007;
  - grades 5, 8 and 11 writing every two years beginning in 2008;
  - grades 6, 9 and 12 personal and social skills every two years beginning in 2009;
  - grades 7 and 10 science every two years beginning in 2010.

  The 2007 mathematics and reading assessments are on schedule to be administered in the spring of 2007, scored in the summer, with reports being disseminated to schools in the fall of 2007.

Development of the 2008 writing assessments are well underway and on schedule to be administered in the spring of 2008.

Some development work has been done in the Personal and Social Skills, and Science assessments, scheduled to be administered in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

- Continue to strengthen curriculum to focus on learning outcomes. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ As part of the learning program renewal, Department curriculum consultants have developed a common framework for curriculum documents, and have developed a working definition of outcomes and indicators. Outcomes have been developed for each area of study for all grades from Kindergarten to Grade 9. While these are only in the initial draft stage, significant progress has been made toward development of outcomes-based curriculum. The first curriculum to be produced in the new format, with learning outcomes as the core, will be Mathematics for K, 1, 4, and 7.

- Provide funding to the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission which will support family literacy by building upon existing programs and the community-based literacy system. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ The Department provided $2,520,000 to the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission in 2006-07. Of that amount, $1,984,000 was third party funding for literacy programs and initiatives, and the remainder was for operating the Commission.

  The Commission offered three funding programs:

  - Family Literacy Initiative – provided $308,560 through a competitive process to 20 community-based organizations and family literacy service providers across the province, to provide family literacy activity and programming.
  - Adult Literacy funding - provided $805,882 to SIAST, regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, and community-based organizations to provide tutoring, class room instruction, and support to adult literacy learners.
  - SaskSmart Innovations Fund – this new program provided $778,370 in funding for 24 communities to develop and implement new opportunities for community-based literacy programs that focused on family and workplace literacy development across the province. The Fund also provided $139,300 to support research, hold the Model Community Literacy Festival, develop a Northern Literacy Strategy, and provide contracts for the Saskatchewan Literacy Network and Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network for contributions to the expansion of literacy opportunities in Saskatchewan.

- Enhance technology in education by:
  - developing a PreK-12 policy framework around technology in education for Saskatchewan; and
  - establishing a governance structure that will allow the sector to identify and implement shared technology solutions to address current and emerging needs. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ A discussion paper was prepared to support the development of the technology in education PreK-12 policy framework and to make recommendations around a new governance structure.

  It is anticipated that the framework will be completed in 2007-08, with an implementation plan to follow. Consultations on the governance structure have begun, and it is expected that the initial direction will be determined by Fall 2007. Further activities will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Review and renew First Nations and Métis Education Policy to improve:
  - the universal understanding by all learners of First Nations and Métis peoples and their contributions; and,
  - outcomes for First Nations and Métis learners through content, perspective, and indigenous knowledge. [2006-07 planned result]

- A sub-committee of the Aboriginal Education Provincial Advisory Committee (AEPAC) was formed to advise the development of a new policy. A frame-work for the new policy has been approved by the sub-committee and was presented to AEPAC in January 2007. The policy document will be written in 2007-08.

Measurement Results:

Student performance in mathematics, reading, and science in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

	The scales used to arrive at overall reading, mathematics and science scores were standardized to produce an international average of 500, with 2/3 of student scores between 400 and 600.		
Mathematics		Sask	Canada
	2000: (baseline)	525	533
	2003:	516	532
	2006: Results of the 2006 PISA will not be available until late 2007.		
Reading		Sask	Canada
	2000: (baseline)	529	534
	2003:	512	528
	2006: Results of the 2006 PISA will not be available until late 2007.		
Science		Sask	Canada
	2000: (baseline)	522	529
	2003:	506	519
	2006: Results of the 2006 PISA will not be available until late 2007.		

***(2000 and 2003 Data Source:** Statistics Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada 2006, Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program 2005)*

Assessment measures are valuable indicators of levels of student learning outcomes however, they do not describe all aspects of student learning. They can best be used as point-in-time information for planning and improvement processes.

The PISA study occurs every three years, and focuses on young people's ability to use their knowledge and skills to meet real life challenges. These skills are believed to be prerequisites to efficient learning in adulthood and for full participation in society (Statistics Canada (2004) *Measuring up: Canadian Results of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) PISA Study).*

This measure demonstrates how Saskatchewan 15-year-old students are performing on the PISA in relation to the average of Canadian 15-year-old students.

PISA 2003 results show that Saskatchewan 15-year-olds performed significantly below the Canadian average in Science, Reading, Mathematics, and Problem Solving. This is a significant change from PISA 2000 when Saskatchewan 15-year-olds had results similar to the Canadian average. Saskatchewan's results on PISA 2003 are similar to those of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia for Reading and Science; and similar to those same provinces as well as Newfoundland and Labrador in Mathematics and Problem Solving.

A lower percentage of Saskatchewan students are performing in the upper two levels of mathematics performance compared to the Canadian Average (15% versus 20%).

Student performance in reading, math, and science on the national Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP).

The PCAP, an assessment of 13-year-old students across Canada, will begin in spring 2007, replacing the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) which discontinued assessments in 2003. The results from this assessment will become the baseline for this measure and will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

The PCAP will provide an indicator of how Saskatchewan 13-year-old students are performing relative to other Canadian 13-year-old students.

Graduation rates by type of credential

Grade 12: (Graduates from K-12 provincially-funded, First Nation, and independent schools offering 24-credit program)	2001-02: approx. 78% of 18 yr olds in province (12,341 grads) 2002-03: 77.9% of 18-yr olds in province (12,276 grads) 2003-04: 75.8% of 18-yr olds in province (11,908 grads) 2004-05: 77.7% of 18-yr olds in province (11,838 grads) *(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Student Data System; Statistics Canada, CANSIM, 18-year-olds in 2005, Table 051-0001)*
Grade 12 equivalency: **GED** ('participants' includes those who wrote at least 1 of the 5 GED tests during the year, regardless of status) **Adult 12** (provincially-funded K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions; number of participants cannot be determined)	2002: 59.41% (679 completers of 1143 participants) 2003: 55.08% (764 completers of 1387 participants) 2004: 54.31% (888 completers of 1635 participants) 2005: 55.71% (927 completers of 1664 participants) 2006: 57.39% (835 completers of 1455 participants) *(Source: NRSpro.com)* 2001-02: 404 completers 2002-03: 580 completers 2003-04: 597 completers 2004-05: 675 completers 2005-06: 854 completers *(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Student Data System)*

Numbers may differ slightly from those previously reported due to broader inclusion of students on the Student Data System and due to ongoing maintenance and updating of the System.

Saskatchewan Learning acknowledges that not all students go on to post-secondary education or training. However, as youth who do not graduate from high school are at a serious disadvantage in terms of personal and economic life success, it is desirable that Grade 12 graduation or equivalency be the minimal achievement by Saskatchewan youth.

This measure provides an assessment of how well the learning sector is doing in terms of producing graduates and program completers.

The number of learners achieving Grade 12 graduation and GED completion has remained relatively consistent over recent years. However the number of learners graduating from an Adult 12 program has been increasing over that same period.

Percent of students in a cohort starting Grade 10 in the year shown who complete Grade 12 within three years:

2000-01 - 73.7% (baseline)
2001-02 - 73.6%
2002-03 - 73.7%

(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Student Data System) Numbers may differ slightly from those previously reported due to broader inclusion of students on the Student Data System, and due to ongoing maintenance and updating of the System.

Percent of students in a cohort starting Grade 10 in the year shown who complete Grade 12 within five years:

1999-00 - 80.3% (baseline)
2000-01 - 80.2%
2001-02 - 79.8%

(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Student Data System) Numbers may differ slightly from those previously reported due to broader inclusion of students on the Student Data System and due to ongoing maintenance and updating of the System.

Students are expected to graduate within three years of starting Grade 10, however a certain percentage of students graduate a few years beyond the normal graduation year. This measure reflects the persistence of Saskatchewan high school students in achieving Grade 12 graduation within a reasonable period of time following entry into Grade 10.

As the ability to track student enrolment, movement, and retention improves, it is anticipated that all of the results for Grade 12 graduation will improve.

The Department's role in achieving all of these results (student performance, graduation rates, and persistence in graduating) is to develop curricula that engages learners, provide supports to teachers and students, and contribute funding for delivery of programs and services. Our sector partners also have a significant impact on these measures through their instructional approaches and student services and supports, as do the students themselves and their parents.

Objective 3: Provide equitable opportunities for all learners

Saskatchewan Learning is committed to meeting the needs of the whole child and youth population by keeping young people in school, ensuring that the education system is responding to the interests and aspirations of today's children and youth, and ensuring that every child, regardless of socio-economic status, location, first language, or ability, has access to a high quality education.

These opportunities are not restricted to what's happening in our classrooms. The provision of high quality early learning and child care services contribute to healthy child development and to the general health of the population – healthy people positively contribute to their families, communities, and province.

As well, early learning and child care supports will contribute to the implementation of Saskatchewan's labour market strategy by growing our future labour force, and by supporting parents in participating in today's labour force.

The Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council is a partnership between Saskatchewan Learning, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and the federal government. The Council was established to develop compatible educational standards between the provincial education system and the First Nations' education system, for the benefit of all children and youth living in Saskatchewan.

The Department has made good progress in achieving this objective, despite the federal government's phase out of the Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements and its substantial funding commitments.

Key Results

- Through the Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council (SSCBC) the Department will focus on:
    - maintaining and enhancing shared curriculum outcomes and objectives;
    - creating and strengthening joint opportunities, including assessment and evaluation, distance learning, and language and cultural programming; and

- developing shared performance measures and accountability for improved outcomes for First Nations and Métis learners. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ Curriculum, and Language and Culture sub-committees of the SSCBC have been established to identify issues for SSCBC consideration, capacity building, and work plan development.

The Department has agreed to entrench First Nation and Métis content, perspectives and ways of knowing across the PreK-12 spectrum as it renews the provincial learning program.

The agreement with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations to collaborate through the SSCBC has been reconfirmed, thereby increasing the opportunity to build on the strengths of the provincial education system and First Nation education authorities.

- Continue to move forward on implementation of a made-in-Saskatchewan system of early learning and child care including:
  - expand licensed child care by an additional 500 spaces across the province;
  - enhance the salaries of child care staff;
  - eliminate the wait list for children with high levels of disability to access funding for child care;
  - develop and implement program enhancements for licensed family child care homes such as increased start up funding, support for alternate caregivers, and nutrition grants;
  - provide capital funding to support the maintenance and renovation of existing child care infrastructure and the development of new spaces; and,
  - continue to work with school divisions to increase their capacity to provide community leadership in building a system that blends early learning and child care with education, and prepare for broad-based Prekindergarten in future years. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ The activities in 2006-07 focused on the transition of the Early Learning and Child Care Branch from the Department of Community Resources to Saskatchewan Learning, thereby providing a focal point for the blended early learning and child care vision.

▸ 250 new licensed child care centre spaces were developed in 2006-07. It is expected the remainder will be developed in 2007-08.

▸ Funding was provided to licensed child care centres to implement an average 9% wage lift for centre staff, effective April 1, 2006.

▸ No high needs child waited for funding for child care services in 2006-07.

▸ Discussions were initiated in 2006-07 between the Facilities Branch and the Early Learning and Child Care Branch, to determine supports needed to maintain and renovate the existing child care infrastructure and develop new spaces. Funding for this purpose will be issued in 2007-08.

▸ In January 2007 a focus group was held with representatives from school divisions, to discuss their role in early learning and child care.

▸ Other actions listed are expected to be performed in 2007-08 and will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Support the Departments of First Nations and Métis Relations, and Justice, in development of a provincial anti-racism strategy. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ The First Nations and Métis Education Branch represented Saskatchewan Learning on an interdepartmental working committee to develop a provincial Anti-Racism Strategy.

- In partnership with the Department of First Nations and Métis Relations, and the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, work toward a representative workforce throughout the provincial PreK-12 system. [2006-07 planned result]

- The Department developed a plan with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association and the First Nations & Métis Relations Department to create a representative workforce agreement. This agreement was signed on February 8, 2007. Saskatchewan Learning contributed $50,000 in 2006-07 to establish a Representative Workforce Coordinator position within the Saskatchewan School Boards Association office, to liaise with Saskatchewan school divisions.

- Develop and pilot guidelines to better assist school divisions in identifying students with intense needs. [2006-07 planned result]

  - "Impact profile" guidelines were developed to assist school divisions in identifying students with intensive needs. The guidelines were developed in collaboration with a number of schools divisions, and were piloted from October 2006 to March 2007.

- As part of Phase 2 of the K-12 Operating Grant redevelopment, revise the diversity factor to include targeted funding to address the needs of students whose mother tongue is not English. [2006-07 planned result]

  - The diversity factor was revised as part of the Phase 2 K-12 Operating Grant redevelopment, for implementation in 2007-08. Funding from the diversity, shared services, and English as a Second Language factors were combined into a new revised diversity factor.

    Funding is allocated both on a per student basis, and targeted funding based on four socio-economic indicators:

    - percent of families living below the Low Income Cut-off;
    - percent of lone parent families;
    - percent of families with low educational attainment; and
    - percent of families whose mother tongue is not English.

- Develop an overarching conceptual framework and policy clarifying best practices, linking program supports and strengthening strategic focus and outcomes, including renewing support for SchoolPLUS, Community Education, and other initiatives into a coherent frame. [2006-07 planned result]

  - In March 2007 a Senior Advisor to the Deputy Minister was appointed to conduct a comprehensive review of initiatives related to addressing the diverse needs of students and their barriers to learning.

- Develop a Caring and Respectful Schools Bullying Prevention policy. [2006-07 planned result]

  - *The Caring and Respectful Schools: Bullying Prevention: A Model Policy* was completed in August 2006 and was provided to all Directors of Education and school administrators in September 2006 for their consideration in developing their own local policies.

    This resource, written in response to requests from school divisions, provides assistance to schools and communities in strengthening their current policies and practices to prevent bullying, and includes a definition of bullying and key components of an effective bullying prevention policy.

- Develop an early childhood program for use in Saskatchewan francophone schools. [2006-07 planned result]

  - A partnership among Saskatchewan Learning, the Francophone school division, and the Francophone Parent's Association was established in order to coordinate early childhood services province-wide. The first centre to provide a wide variety of early childhood services for Francophone children will open in October 2007 in the School Community Centre École canadienne-français de Saskatoon.

- Enhance CommunityNet by facilitating the expansion of on-line learning opportunities and co-ordinating technical support services. [2006-07 planned result]

  - The Department facilitated the delivery of interactive broadcasts and on-line supports for "Art on the Air" and "Tune into the Arts", programs for teachers and students to support arts education in grades 1-8. Also, school divisions were assisted in the preliminary implementation of video conferencing technologies over CommunityNet.

- Expand the capabilities of CommunityNet to support the emerging needs of the sector. [2006-07 planned result]

  - The Department upgraded 259 provincial school and school division CommunityNet connections and 29 public libraries' connections as a result of the development and implementation of a more consistent and equitable approach to the Department's provision of CommunityNet connections in the K-12 system. The central internet capacity for the learning sector was increased from 150 mb/s to 200 mb/s.

- Along with six other departments, continue to implement the five-year $20 million federal/provincial Northern Development Agreement expiring in February of 2007. [2006-07 Performance Plan Summary]

  - During 2006, the Department's responsibility for the Northern Development Agreement (NDA) was transferred to the Department of Advanced Education and Employment, however it continued to be administered by the Northern Regional Office of Saskatchewan Learning.

Measurement Results

The number of licensed child care spaces

March 31, 2006 - 8,712 (baseline)
March 31, 2007 - 8,842
(Source: Department of Community Resources, Child Care Mainframe System and Maximizer software)

The commitment to develop 250 new licensed child care spaces in 2006-07 was met. However, during the same period, closures of licensed home child care facilities resulted in a loss of licensed spaces, resulting in a net increase of 130 spaces over March 31, 2006.

Number of Community Schools funded by Saskatchewan Learning

1980-81: 11 (baseline)
2000-01: 41
2001-02: 83
2002-03: 88
2003-04: 98
2004-05: 98
2005-06: 98
2006-07: 98
(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, 2006-07 K-12 Funding Manual Appendix E: Listing of Community Schools)

A detailed review of Community Schools funding is planned for 2007-08.

Number of K-12 courses delivered by the Department and the total number of students enrolled in them

	Technology Supported Learning Unit		Interactive Televised Instruction
	Print	On-Line	
2000-01			
Courses delivered:	57	4	7
Students enrolled:	3848	105	312
2001-02			
Courses delivered:	56	7	7
Students enrolled:	3589	157	405
2002-03			
Courses delivered:	58	12	8
Students enrolled:	3656	192	367
2003-04			
Courses delivered:	52	11	12
Students enrolled:	3446	175	374
2004-05			
Courses delivered:	55	12	11
Students enrolled:	3508	180	437
2005-06			
Courses delivered:	61	14	13
Students enrolled:	3545	238	400
2006-07			
Courses delivered:	40	14	15
Students enrolled:	2435	930	492

Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Technology Supported Learning Revolving Fund 2006-07 Annual Report Results)

There are a number of children and youth who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to participate in learning in a traditional classroom, or whose school is not able to offer the desired courses. This measure reflects the Department's continued focus on providing access to learning opportunities and support services for teachers and students, regardless of their geographic location, or the limitations of their school/school division.

Objective 4: Support all learners in successfully transitioning to, within, and from PreK-12 programs and services

Transitions to, within, and from early learning and PreK-12 programs and services occur at varying times and under different circumstances, and involve not only learning environments within the Department's purview, but First Nations' schools and youth custody facilities as well.

Addressing the challenges and issues of children and youth not attending school, or who are at risk of leaving school, requires collaboration among human service departments to develop recommendations for policy, legislation, procedures, information sharing, and programs and services.

The Department has made good progress towards achieving this objective in 2006-07.

Key Results

- Through the Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council (SSCBC), the Department will focus on:
  - strengthening First Nations participation in the Student Data System; and,
  - supporting smooth transitions for students as they move between First Nations systems and the provincial education system to promote improved retention and outcomes in both systems. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ A Department representative from the First Nations & Métis Education Branch attends monthly meetings of First Nations Directors of Education, to strengthen capacity between the systems, including full participation by First Nations in the Student Data System.

  Through the SSCBC, mutually beneficial accommodations are being discussed for students transferring between provincial and First Nations education systems, and student record sharing, with the intention of identifying shared standards in support of these transitions.

- Develop a protocol among Learning, Community Resources, Health, and Corrections and Public Safety to support children and youth who are not enrolled in an approved education program, or are at risk of leaving school. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ A number of activities occurred in 2006-07 in support of children and youth who are not enrolled in an approved education program, or are at risk of leaving school:
    - established Memoranda of Understanding for the sharing of information in relation to providing services related to children and youth not in school, and to verify data in the Student Data System;
    - established a pilot project in Saskatoon to test approaches and provide input to the development of a provincial protocol;
    - communicated interim guidelines to school administrators, describing intended practices for locating and supporting students not in school;
    - researched effective practices and developed a draft protocol in collaboration with the Departments of Community Resources, Health, and Corrections and Public Safety.

- Proceed with enhancement of the Career Development Action Plan which focuses on supporting children and youth to participate effectively in the social and economic future of our province, including:
  - support to four school divisions to work with other school divisions in their economic regions to strengthen connections between secondary schools and regional planning related to career and employment services, business and industry, economic development and post-secondary education;
  - strengthened focus on career development in Grades 6-12, including support for the implementation of mandatory career development curriculum in Grades 6-9; and,
  - enhanced teacher competency to provide guidance to students through professional development. [2006-07 planned result]

- The Career Development Action Plan for the Department has become part of a wider government labour market strategy. A budget submission was successful in acquiring funding to support a number of initiatives in 2007-08. Several opportunities for demonstration sites have been identified and some initial work has been done to establish the scope and feasibility of these projects.

  Career development is one of the main tenets of the learning program renewal, and as such, is receiving attention in the development of learning outcomes for all areas of study. Curriculum developers are identifying strategies that will enable career development to be supported in all curricula. More specifically, Middle Level Career Guidance curriculum is undergoing the same analysis and renewal as all other subject areas, and outcomes and indicators that are closely related to the Blueprint for Life/Work Design have been developed for this curriculum.

  Career development is supported across the province by a group of approximately 20 teacher leaders who have developed a series of six workshops related to various aspects of career development. These teachers deliver the workshops upon request, and have provided approximately ten workshops to interested school divisions. Two planning sessions were held in 2006-07 by the teacher leader team to provide strategies for developing career development plans at the school division level.

- In partnership with others, invest in the revitalization of Regina's inner city by planning and funding two facilities in Regina:
  - the Regina trades and skills centre, to better engage youth in learning and the labour market; and,
  - the North Central community services centre, aimed at improving services to the inner city. [2006-07 planned result]

  - Work on securing the facility for the trades and skills centre was initiated and will continue into 2007-08.

  - Planning for the North Central community services centre has begun and it is expected will be complete by December 2007.

  - Funding for both facilities has been issued and is being held in trust until decisions around the facilities are finalized.

In addition to progress made on planned actions, other key results include:

- In partnership with the Department of Advanced Education and Employment, support the investment in the revitalization of the Mount Royal neighbourhood in Saskatoon through the development of a trades and skills centre, to better engage youth in learning and the labour market.

  - Planning around the use of Mount Royal Collegiate was initiated. A study to relocate school functions and create the space needed for post-secondary education functions and integrated training programs will occur in 2007-08.

Measurement Results

Percentage of students, by school type, included in the Student Data System

Provincially-funded schools	June 30, 2004: 74.8 % (baseline) June 30, 2005: 97.8 % June 30, 2006: 100 %
First Nations schools	June 30, 2004: 57.5 % (baseline) June 30, 2005: 63.7 % June 30, 2006: 63.7 %
Independent schools (includes historical high schools)	June 30, 2004: 75.1 % (baseline) June 30, 2005: 97.0 % June 30, 2006: 92.6 %
Custody & Care schools	June 30, 2004: 100 % (baseline) June 30, 2005: 100 % June 30, 2006: 100 %

(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Student Data System)

Objective 5: Increase opportunities to enable First Nations and Métis learners to participate and succeed in sector programs and services

Saskatchewan has a young, diverse, and growing First Nations and Métis population. Unfortunately, not all First Nations and Métis learners have fully benefited from the provincial K-12 education system.

Educational success for First Nations and Métis learners results in better self-sufficiency and well-being. First Nations and Métis people can significantly contribute to addressing Saskatchewan's labour market shortages in the short and long-term if they are adequately prepared.

By increasing opportunities for First Nations and Métis learners in sector programs and services it is expected that those learners will have improved educational achievement, thereby leading to labour market attachment, a representative workforce, and the resulting contribution to the provincial economy.

The Department has made substantial progress on this front in 2006-07, through its activities in curriculum renewal, the Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council, and piloting the Assessment for Learning program in reserve schools.

Key Results

- Integrate First Nations and Métis content, perspectives, and indigenous knowledge in the curricula of all K-12 subject areas at all grade levels. [2006-07 planned result]

  - First Nations and Métis content, perspectives, and ways of knowing are foundationally entrenched throughout the PreK-12 learning program renewal for the benefit of all students, and will be further articulated through the work of the Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council (SSCBC).

    The SSCBC has established a Curriculum sub-committee and a Language and Culture sub-committee for this purpose.

    Current partnerships with First Nations and Métis teachers and Elders are focusing on developing instructional materials that support First Nations and Métis content, perspectives, and ways of knowing in the science curriculum for Grades 6-10.

- In partnership with First Nations and Métis people and communities, examine the learning program to ensure effective practices for First Nations and Métis education. Some specific actions of the Shared Standards and Capacity Building Council (SSCBC) include a focus on:

- special education;
- language and culture;
- curriculum;
- early learning and child care;
- Assessment for Learning/Continuous Improvement Framework;
- development of teachers; and,
- governance. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ SSCBC sub-committees have been developed. Terms of Reference and work plans for each sub-committee are being collaboratively developed between the provincial and the First Nations education systems in support of student achievement and well-being.

Discussions are on-going with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), to secure INAC as a signatory to the current agreement between the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatchewan Learning, in recognition of INACs treaty and jurisdictional responsibility for First Nations peoples.

Further reporting on this action will be included in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Support development of effective Indigenous language curriculum, to be available for use in all schools:
  - K-3 Cree immersion program;
  - K-12 instructional program; and,
  - 10-12 credit program. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ $200,000 was invested in 2006-07 in the Gift of Language and Culture project, in partnership with First Nation education authorities, to develop nursery (Prekindergarten) to Grade 2 resources and programs for the Cree language. A variety of resources, programs, and interactive websites were created as a result of this project. The Gift of Language and Culture project supports schools in both provincial and First Nations education systems to establish Cree Immersion and instruction programs.

A draft of the nehiyawiwin 10, 20, 30 curriculum was completed. It is anticipated that this curriculum will be finalized by June 2007.

- Expand opportunity for First Nations learners in on-reserve schools to participate in the Assessment for Learning (AFL) program. [2006-07 planned result]

▸ A pilot project with the Treaty 4 First Nations Group has been established whereby AFL data will be used to guide instructional practices and improvement programs to increase student achievement in reserve schools. An invitation to participate in the AFL Program has been extended to reserve schools through the First Nations and Métis Education Branch.

In addition to progress made on planned actions, other key results include:

- Develop a framework to provide infrastructure support for the delivery of First Nations and Métis language and cultural programming.

▸ Discussions were initiated between the Facilities Branch and First Nations and Métis Education Branch, to determine the supports needed.

Measurement Results

Percent of self-declared First Nations and Métis students in a cohort starting Grade 10 in the year shown who complete Grade 12 within three years

Percent of self-declared First Nations and Métis students in a cohort starting Grade 10 in the year shown who complete Grade 12 within five years

The Student Data System (SDS) was implemented in 2004-05. The data available in the SDS is much richer and more representative of the First Nations and Métis student population than data previously available.

The first meaningful data on persistence of First Nations and Métis students completing Grade 12 within three or five years will be from the cohort entering Grade 10 in 2004-05. The first graduates from that cohort will be in 2007-08 and accordingly

data is not available for this Annual Report. This data will become the baseline, and will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

In the interest of providing data that is more accurately reflective of First Nations and Métis students' persistence to graduate, no data from previous years will be reported.

Goal 2: Highly responsive and accountable learning system

Objective 1: Provide a high standard of public accountability, transparency, and governance

Saskatchewan Learning provides leadership and direction to the PreK-12 learning system and the public library system to support continuous improvement in system-wide public accountability practices. There are a variety of relationships between the Department and its partners. These relationships vary by degree of accountability and are described in numerous pieces of legislation (see Appendix B).

As our partners have a large degree of control over the desired performance results, it is important that the Department develops and supports strong accountability standards and tools to monitor and report on both performance and financial results in school divisions. This includes defining accountability mechanisms and tools that enhance operational accountability across school divisions, better engage the community in support of the learning program, align operations to provincial priorities, and improve student learning outcomes.

Also important in achieving this objective is the development and maintenance of an equitable, transparent, and simple financing system, and consideration of the property taxes levied by school divisions in determining the most equitable balance of provincial and local funding of the K-12 learning system.

The Department has made significant progress in advancing this objective.

Key Results

- Implement the Continuous Improvement Framework (CIF), including:
  - completion and distribution of the *Continuous Improvement Framework Guide* to all school divisions;
  - consultations with all school divisions to support development and publication of school divisions' Continuous Improvement Plans and Reports;
  - information collection from school divisions to inform Department practice, policy development, and legislative changes needed to support improved student learning outcomes; and,
  - leading a process to support school divisions in bi-annual conferencing. [2006-07 planned result]

- ▸ The *Continuous Improvement Framework Guide* was distributed to all school divisions in the province. It was also posted on the Department's website at www.learning.gov.sk.ca/branches/aar/ci/CIFGuide.pdf.

- ▸ Consultation meetings were held with all 28 school divisions in the province to discuss the development of their Continuous Improvement Plans. These plans are based on provincial priorities and indicate the strategies and outcome measures that school divisions will be undertaking to advance and report on improved learner outcomes.

  Information collected from these consultations was summarized in a Progress Report. This Report contains a summary and recommendations, based on progress made by school divisions in advancing the four provincial priorities of the CIF. It includes information on specific themes identified by school divisions related to these priorities, and school divisions' suggestions on strengthening the CIF and the processes related to improving student outcomes.

- ▸ A *Bi-annual Conference Guide* was produced and circulated to all school divisions to support the first round of reporting to take place beginning in October 2007.

- Introduce legislation and regulations which support implementation of School Community Councils in provincially-funded schools throughout the province. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ Legislative amendments to establish School Community Councils were proclaimed on May 19, 2006. Regulations outlining specific parameters related to the purpose, formation, composition, responsibilities, and accountability of School Community Councils came into effect on October 25, 2006.

- Provide support to school divisions and monitor implementation of School Community Councils in all provincially-funded schools, including:

  - elections for each School Community Council; and
  - orientation and in-service for all School Community Councils. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ In 2006-07 the Department provided school divisions with $12 million in additional funding recognition in the per student basic rate for the establishment, implementation, and administrative support of School Community Councils. This funding recognition was intended to:

  - support the designation of a senior administrative person in each school division with responsibility to provide advice, support, and communication assistance for School Community Councils;
  - principal release time;
  - in-school administrative support; and
  - operating expenses for individual Councils.

  ▸ As well, in 2006-07, the Department contracted the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (the Association) to deliver workshops and inservice to Directors of Education, school division administrators, and School Community Council members (primarily principals) regarding the establishment and implementation of School Community Councils. To the end of March 2007 the Association delivered at least 40 days of inservice and workshops to this broad audience with the focus to date being on school division administrators.

  ▸ In collaboration with other educational stakeholders, the Association developed two web-based handbooks for School Community Councils -- one for boards of education and administrators, and one for Councils and principals. It also developed a number of guidebooks and presentations to support Councils in their establishment and implementation.

  School divisions are at various stages of implementation, from developing policies, to planning and holding elections, to operating Councils. While most school divisions are anticipated to have School Community Councils in place by the end of the 2006-07 school year, some have elections planned for the fall of 2007. Implementation results will be published in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Develop and implement a work plan to move school divisions to financial statements compliant with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) by the start of the 2008-09 school year to improve the quality, reliability, and timeliness of school division financial reporting. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ A consultant was contracted to provide professional accounting advice and to assist in developing an implementation strategy to ensure that school divisions are compliant with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for the public sector by the start of the 2008-09 school year.

  The Department began working with school divisions and the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials (SASBO) to address implementation issues and to develop policies.

- Provide education property tax relief targeted to agricultural property owners through a 38 per cent Education Property Tax Credit to meet government's commitment to a 60/40 provincial/local financing arrangement for agricultural property tax payers, and an eight per cent tax credit for non-agricultural property owners. [2006-07 planned result]

  ▸ The Education Property Tax Relief program provided a 38 per cent credit on agricultural property and an eight per cent credit for non-agricultural (residential and commercial) property, with a $2,500 cap on the credit for commercial property.

The 60/40 provincial/local financing split for agricultural property tax payers in 2006 will be reviewed upon receipt of updated data from the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA) and from school division audited financial statements. This information is required to analyze total provincial funding to monitor the portion of K-12 education costs that are paid by agricultural property taxes, and up dated information has not yet been received. It is anticipated that the 60/40 split between provincial and local agricultural funding will remain unchanged. This indicator will continue to be monitored in the future.

- Implement Phase 2 of the K-12 Operating Grant redevelopment to meet government's commitment to a more equitable, transparent, and simple funding formula. [2006-07 planned result]

  - Consistent with government's May 2004 commitment, a number of changes were made to the K-12 Operating Grant during 2006-07, for implementation effective April 1, 2007, resulting in a simpler, more transparent and more equitable funding system.

    Boards will receive more unconditional funding, more funding earlier in the fiscal year, and will have greater management flexibility. Additional accountability is required around outcomes, particularly related to student achievement, through the Continuous Improvement Framework.

    Only seven school divisions will be negatively impacted by funding system changes (totalling $2.7 million). A one-time funding system adjustment will be made to the grants for these divisions to ensure no school division's grant falls below last year's allocation.

    For more information on the Phase 2 changes, see Appendix B in the 2007-08 K-12 Operating Grant Funding Policy Manual (www.learning.gov.sk.ca/branches/edfinance/funding/index.shtml)

- Fully fund the incremental cost of teachers' collective agreement increases. [2006-07 Performance Plan Summary]

  - The Government of Saskatchewan is meeting its commitment to fully fund the increases to teachers' salaries as a result of the negotiated contract ratified in June 2005. The 2006-07 budget included a net increase of $10.5 million related to teacher salary increases (gross increase of $19.5 million less $9 million in 2004-05 retroactive costs). This funding has been added into the basic per pupil rate and allocated to school divisions through the K-12 Operating Grant.

- Conduct a review of Independent Schools and make recommendations regarding:

  - independent schools legislation (statutes and regulations);
  - policies and practices relating to the children and youth enrolled in independent schools, their parents, and the public;
  - governance of independent schools; and,
  - funding of independent schools. [2006-07 planned result]

  - In December 2006 the Minister of Learning directed the Department to undertake a review of Independent Schools. Since that time, issues have been identified, background research has been completed, and a discussion guide has been developed and distributed to all Independent Schools and educational stakeholders. Consultation will begin with Independent Schools and educational stakeholders in April 2007 and those results will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Complete analytical work on remaining K-12 Operating Grant factors and move into an ongoing review cycle. [2007-08 planned result]

  - Following implementation of Phase 1 and Phase 2 changes, a number of grant factors remain that must be reviewed. Many of these will be reviewed in 2007-08, for implementation in 2008-09, and will be reported on in the 2007-08 Annual Report.

- Begin to review and strengthen business processes between the Department and school divisions to improve data collection and reporting. [2006-07 planned result]

- Saskatchewan Learning has reduced the reporting requirements for school divisions by:
  - eliminating conditional funding (for example, core language programs, other transportation, technical aids that are less than $10,000); and
  - changing French Immersion recognition from an instruction basis to a per pupil basis.

Measurement Results

The percentage of School Community Councils elected and in place in provincially-funded schools

June 30, 2006 - 0 (baseline)

Data regarding the number or percentage of School Community Councils that are elected and in place will be available following the Fall 2007 data collection for the Continuous Improvement Framework.

The percentage of School Community Councils that are operational in provincially-funded schools

June 30, 2006 - 0 (baseline)

Data regarding the number or percentage of School Community Councils that are operational will be available following the Fall 2007 data collection for the Continuous Improvement Framework.

The number of School Division Continuous Improvement Plans developed and made available to their communities and to the Department

28 school divisions (100%) have submitted Continuous Improvement Plans to Saskatchewan Learning. Progress on school division strategies for reporting to their communities will be reported in the 2007-08 Annual Report.
(Source: Saskatchewan Learning, Accountability, Assessment & Records Branch files)

School Division Continuous Improvement Plans are an integral component of the Continuous Improvement Framework (CIF). The CIF is designed to strengthen strategic planning, monitoring, and accountability for system operations and student outcomes. It represents a significant change in the accountability relationship between the Province, school divisions and the public, and in how the school system "does business".

This measure indicates the degree to which the CIF is being implemented within school divisions and schools across the province.

Public satisfaction with the learning system and public library system

	July 2005 (baseline)	**January 2006**	**Sept 2006 (new baseline)**	**Jan 2007**
Percent of residents who think the quality of Kindergarten to grade 12 education in Saskatchewan is generally:	Good-Very Good: 51% Poor-Very Poor: 15%	Good-Very Good: 54% Poor-Very Poor: 12%	Good - Excellent: 52% Poor-Very Poor: 10%	Good-Excellent: 56% Poor-Very Poor: 7%
Percent of residents who think the quality of service from the public library system is generally:	Not comparable	Good-Very Good: 77% Poor-Very Poor: 6%	Good-Excellent: 67% Poor-Very Poor: 6%	Good-Excellent: 66% Poor-Very Poor: 4%

(Source: Saskatchewan Government Public Opinion Surveys. www.executive.gov.sk.ca/polling.htm)

Quality programs and services are required to ensure learner success.

This measure tracks general public perceptions about the quality of K-12 education and public library systems, based on results of a random sample of 1,200 survey participants from across Saskatchewan. The survey is considered statistically accurate to a 95% confidence level of +/- 2.8%.

Confidence in the learning sector is reflected in a variety of ways, including satisfaction expressed through public opinion surveys. Public perceptions related to the learning sector are impacted by a variety of factors including media coverage, other jurisdictions, personal experiences, and the opinions of others.

The January 2007 results shown in the table above are the most recent results. This survey indicates that level of public satisfaction with the quality of K-12 education continues to be positive with over half of respondents indicating the quality of K-12 education is good to excellent. Similarly, two-thirds of survey participants deemed the quality of service provided by the public library system to be good to excellent.

Please note the shaded columns in the table indicate a change to the rating scale used to record results; accordingly, these results cannot be compared to the previous surveys referenced in the table.

Additional survey results are available at www.executive.gov.sk.ca/polling.htm.

Objective 2: Provide high quality learning facilities for all children and youth

High quality learning facilities – be they early learning and child care programs, PreK-12 schools, or public libraries – directly impact the ability of educators to achieve the desired outcomes. It is important that existing facilities are maintained in a timely manner so that problems don't escalate to health and safety concerns.

The Department has made progress in this area despite some significant external challenges such as shifting demographics, and inflation and demand in the construction sector.

Key Results

- Survey school divisions to obtain baseline information to support development of a long-range capital plan for a sustainable infrastructure to support education programs in the province. [2006-07 planned result]

  - A survey was sent to school divisions and responses were received from 17 of 28 divisions. The Education Finance and Facilities Branch and Regional Directors of Education are soliciting additional responses.

- Develop a standardized template and guidelines to enable school divisions to consistently plan for long-range facility needs. [2006-07 planned result]

  - Development of the template and guidelines began in the fall of 2006. The project is to be completed in 2007-08 and submitted to school divisions for their use in 2008.

- In consultation with Saskatchewan Finance and the Capital Co-ordination Committee (consisting of other government departments having capital budgets), establish a government-wide process for determining capital priorities. [2006-07 planned result]

  - The Committee was established. Development of a broader approach to capital planning and priorities is still in its formative stages.

- Develop a proposal regarding support of libraries facilities management, and funding for public libraries capital needs. [2007-08 planned result]

  - Results of this Key Action will be reported in 2007-08.

- Develop and publish changes to facility guidelines to address the government's commitment to early learning and child care. [2006-07 planned result]

  - Facility guidelines for major projects were completed in 2006-07. Broader guidelines will be developed in 2007-08 and reported in that Annual Report.

- Provide $9.8 million in block funding and $12 million for K-12 major capital projects. [2006-07 Performance Plan Summary]

  - This funding was fully allocated to seven major projects and approximately 70 block projects.

In addition to progress made on planned actions, other key results include:

- $22.5 million in additional funding was provided to improve the learning environment in PreK-12 schools, and to cover construction inflation costs for the following projects:
  - $10.8 million for 66 improvement projects in schools around Saskatchewan;
  - $5.9 million for construction and renovation projects in the North;
  - $3.1 million for Centennial Collegiate in Saskatoon;
  - $2.7 million to cover construction inflation costs.

Measurement Results

Under development.

2006-07 Financial Results

Expenditures

The following table outlines information on actual and budgeted expenditures by subvote and subprogram. Variance explanations are provided for all variances that are greater than $0.5 million.

in thousands of dollars			Variance	
Subvote/Sub-Program	**Original Estimate**	**Actual Expenditure**	**Over/ (Under)**	
CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AND SERVICES (LR01)				
Executive Management	985	1,156	171	
Central Services	6,967	7,236	269	
Accommodation Services	3,732	3,761	29	
Subvote Total	**11,684**	**12,153**	**469**	
PreK-12 EDUCATION (LR03)				
Operational Support	5,600	5,529	-71	
School Operating	563,200	561,804	-1,396	1
School Capital Transfers	21,852	59,325	37,473	2
School Capital - Debenture Interest Payments	550	49	-501	3
Regional Services	2,727	2,647	-80	
French Education and International Languages	5,802	5,790	-12	
Educational Agencies	526	726	200	
Subvote Total	**600,257**	**635,870**	**35,613**	
EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE (LR08)				
Operational Support	3,016	2,379	-637	4
KidsFirst	3,177	3,951	774	5
Early Childhood Intervention Program	2,783	2,805	22	
Child Care Facilities	20,937	19,548	-1,389	6
Early Childhood Education	200	200	0	
Subvote Total	**30,113**	**28,883**	**-1,230**	
CURRICULUM AND E-LEARNING (LR10)				
Operational Support	1,110	1,635	525	7
Curriculum and Instruction	2,148	1,999	-149	
Children's Services	546	512	-34	
Secondary Level Digital Learning	300	173	-127	
Technology Supported Learning Revolving Fund - Subsidy	369	369	0	
Subvote Total	**4,473**	**4,688**	**215**	
LITERACY (LR17)				
Saskatchewan Literacy Commission	536	470	-66	
Literacy Initiatives	1,984	2,087	103	
Subvote Total	**2,520**	**2,557**	**37**	

in thousands of dollars

PROVINCIAL LIBRARY (LR15)	**9,365**	**9,287**	**-78**
EDUCATION PROPERTY TAX RELIEF (LR09)	**107,850**	**106,300**	**-1,550** [8]
TEACHERS' PENSIONS AND BENEFITS (LR04)			
Teachers' Superannuation Commission	1,363	1,242	-121
Teachers' Dental Plan	9,129	8,720	-409
Teachers' Extended Health Plan	14,886	12,003	-2,883 [9]
Subvote Total	**25,378**	**21,965**	**-3,413**
TOTAL NON-STATUTORY	**791,640**	**821,704**	**30,064**
Capital Asset Acquisitions	**0**	**-171**	**-171**
Capital Asset Amortization	**1,183**	**1,177**	**-6**
TOTAL DEPARTMENT EXPENSE	**792,823**	**822,710**	**29,886**
STATUTORY SUBVOTES			
Teachers' Superannuation Plan	71,477	115,477	44,000 [10]
Teachers' Group Life Insurance	1,719	1,649	-70
Saskatchewan Teachers' Retirement Plan	40,175	38,235	-1,940 [11]
Technology Supported Learning- Net Financing Requirement	25	19	-6
TOTAL STATUTORY	**113,396**	**155,380**	**41,984**
TOTAL DEPARTMENT OF LEARNING Expense	**906,219**	**978,090**	**71,871**
TOTAL SASKATCHEWAN LEARNING Appropriation	**905,036**	**977,084**	**72,049**

The 2006-07 department appropriation budget was $905 million including statutory funding; the Department overexpended on non-statutory funding by $30 million and overexpended statutory funding by $42 million from the General Revenue Fund.

Supplementary estimates for $37.473 million was for capital funding to provide to school boards to address capital project commitments on a more timely basis and to provide for increased costs for K-12 capital projects due to significant inflation in the construction industry. Also, capital funding was provided for the development of a multi-service neighbourhood-based community centre and a trades and skills training facility in North Central Regina.

Explanations for Major Variances on Appropriation Budget

1. Planned expenditures for First Nations and Metis Education, and Assessment for Learning did not materialize.
2. Supplementary funding provided for school projects and for the development of a multi service community center and trades and skills training facility in Regina.
3. School Debenture Interest Payments were under expended by $0.5 million as the result of interest rates which were lower than expected.
4. Operational Support for Early Learning and Child Care under expended by $0.637 million as the result of savings due to vacancies, and the reallocation of funding to the Department Accommodations budget for office moves.
5. Realignment of $0.774 million in funding to *KidsFirst* from Childcare Facilities.
6. Child Care Facilities under expended by $1.389 million due to a combination of late start-up in the development of new Child Care spaces and the realignment of $0.774 million in funding to *KidsFirst*.

7. Expenditures for the Education Technology Consortium were made from the Department's operating funding; formerly these expenditures had been made from grant funding.
8. Education Property Tax Relief was under expended by $1.55 million reflecting that the actual cost of providing the 8% education tax credit for residential and commercial/industrial classes of property and the 38% credit on agricultural land was lower than anticipated in 2006-07.
9. The Plan was under expended due to lower than anticipated provincial funding requirements resulting from a lower demand for support.
10. The Teachers' Superannuation Plan exceeded budget by $44 million as a result of fewer teachers retiring than anticipated, thus increasing the government's statutory funding requirement.
11. The Saskatchewan Teachers' Retirement Plan was under expended from budget by $1.94 million reflecting a lower than expected level of matching contributions required from the government.

Revenues

The majority of revenue collected by the department is attributable to federal-provincial cost sharing agreements. Other revenue is collected through fee-related services, publications and other miscellaneous items. All revenue collected is deposited in the General Revenue Fund. A summary of the department's 2006-07 budgeted revenue compared to actual revenue is presented below. Variance explanations are provided for all variances greater than $20,000.

in thousands of dollars			
Revenue Category	**Budget**	**Actual Revenue**	**Variance Over/ (Under)**
PRIVILEGES, LICENCES AND PERMITS			
Teacher Certificates	85	86	1
Property and Building Rentals	0	0	0
Examination Fees	0	0	0
Subtotal	**85**	**86**	**1**
SALES, SERVICES AND SERVICE FEES			
Maps, Prints, Books and Publications	130	74	(56) [1]
Other Miscellaneous Services	351	383	32 [2]
Other Registration Fees	0	0	0
Subtotal	**481**	**457**	**(24)**
INTEREST, PREMIUMS, DISCOUNT AND EXCHANGE			
Profit on Foreign Exchange	0	0	0
Subtotal	**0**	**0**	**0**
RECEIPTS FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTS			
Federal-Provincial Cost Sharing Programs	6,487	7,279	792 [3]
Employability Assistance	507	507	0
Subtotal	**6,994**	**7,786**	**792**
OTHER REVENUE			
Proceeds from Other Funds	1	3	2
Casual Revenue	1	77	76 [4]
Refund of Previous Year's Expenditures	25	212	187 [5]
Subtotal	**27**	**292**	**265**
TOTAL REVENUE	**7,587**	**8,621**	**1,034**

Explanations of Major Variances

1. Revenue for Maps, Prints, Books and Publications was lower than the budget by $0.056 million due to fewer sales of curricula than expected.
2. Revenue for Other Miscellaneous Services exceeded budget by $0.032 million due to more student transcripts issued than expected.
3. Revenue for Federal-Provincial Cost Sharing Programs exceeded budget by $0.792 million due mainly to new federal funding for capital projects in Saskatoon ($1 million). A transfer was made to the Student Aid Fund to administer bursaries under the Official Language in Education Agreement, resulting in a decrease in revenue ($0.283 million). New federal funding was provided for the Office of French Language Coordination ($0.196 million), and less federal funding was provided for the public library systems' Community Access Program ($0.121 million)
4. Revenue for Casual Revenue exceeded budget by $0.076 million due to an increase in revenue from schools outside Canada teaching Saskatchewan curricula, an increase in revenue due to secondment agreements, and from the Canadian Council on Learning for research projects.
5. Revenue for Refund of Previous Year's Expenditures exceeded budget by $0.187 million due to repayment of grants from previous fiscal years, and new funding for the Office of French Language Coordination related to the 2005-06 fiscal year.

For audited financial statements or further information, please contact the Communications Branch of the Department of Learning

Special Funds

(All audited financial statements for departments and special funds for the fiscal period just ended may be found at www.gov.sk.ca/finance/paccts/paccts06/compendium)

Prince of Wales Scholarship Fund

The Prince of Wales Scholarship Fund (the Fund) operates under the authority of section 4.1 of *The Education Act, 1995*. The Fund was established on January 1, 2003 for the purpose of assisting students in Community Schools to complete their secondary education. The Department of Learning administers the Fund. Donations received by the Fund qualify for a receipt for income tax purposes.

For audited financial statements or further information please contact the Communications Branch of the Department of Learning.

School Division Tax Loss Compensation Fund

The School Division Tax Loss Compensation Fund (the Fund) was created by an amendment to *The Education Act, 1995* through *The Treaty Land Entitlement Implementation Act* and came into force on June 22, 1993. Regulations to administer the Fund were established by Order in Council on December 14, 1994.

The Fund is administered by the Department of Learning on behalf of school boards. The purpose of the Fund is to provide tax loss compensation to school divisions that lose tax revenue as a result of lands within that school division being set apart as an Indian reserve. The Fund receives money from the provincial (Departments of Government Relations, and First Nations and Métis Relations) and federal (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) governments as part of the Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement. Payments are made to affected school divisions according to the formula stated in the regulations.

For audited financial statements or further information please contact the Communications Branch of the Department of Learning.

Revolving Funds

Technology Supported Learning Revolving Fund

The Technology Supported Learning Revolving Fund (the Fund) is created and governed by *The Education Act, 1995*. It provides accredited high school distance learning courses to Saskatchewan students both within and outside of the Province. It recovers its costs primarily through registration and course fees.

Technology Supported Learning spans the gap where impediments such as distance, disability, and time restrict access to students to physically attend classes for accredited courses. The provision of curriculum through this medium ensures that all students have access to the high quality of education available to the residents of Saskatchewan that can lead to further education and/or employment.

The following table outlines summary information on budgeted and unaudited actuals, for 2006-07, relating to operations of the Fund. Variance explanations have been provided for all variances that are $25,000 or greater.

in thousands of dollars
(unaudited)

	Budget	Actual (unaudited)	Variance Over/ (Under)
Revenue	1,470	1,310	-160 [1]
Expenditures			
Cost of Goods Sold	100	65	-35 [2]
Gross Profit (Loss)	1,370	1,245	-125
Administrative			
Administrative Expenditures	1,753	1,719	-34 [3]
Net Profit (Loss)	-383	-474	-91
Subsidy from General Revenue Fund	369	369	0
Net Profit (Loss) After Subsidy	-14	-105	-91

Explanation of Major Variances
1. Revenue was $160 thousand lower than budget because of the discontinuation of all Grade 9 courses and eleven Grades 10 through 12 courses. In addition, the transition of course delivery from print-based to on-line has caused a decrease in registrations.
2. Cost of goods sold was $35 thousand lower than budget as a result of reduction in print-based courses.
3. Administrative expenses were $34 thousand below budget because of the reduced postage due to transition to on-line courses, the discontinuation of a printed calendar, and a reduction in computer support costs.

For audited financial statements or further information, please contact the Communications Branch of the Department of Learning.

For More Information

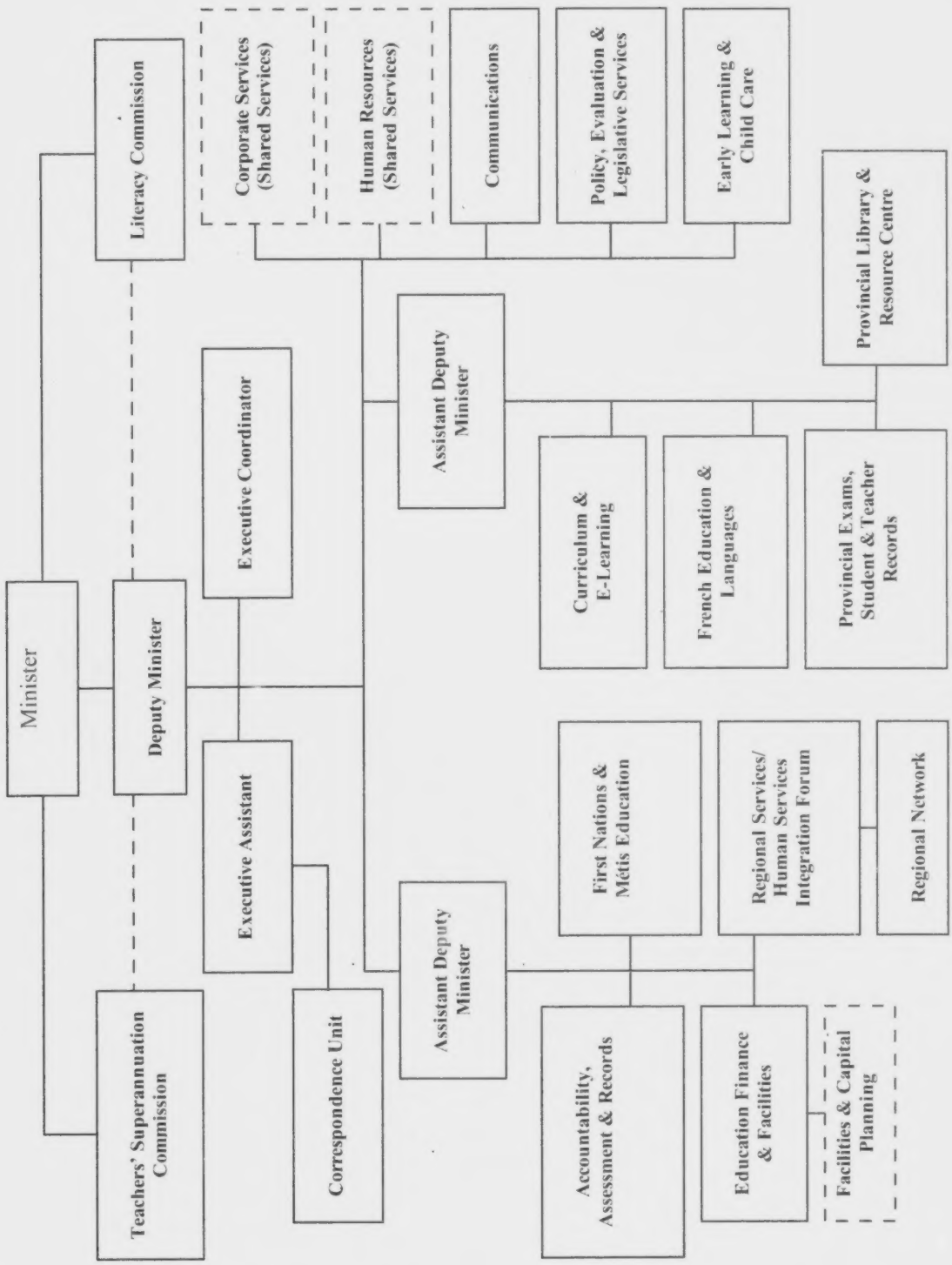
If you have any questions or comments, or would like additional copies of the 2006-07 Annual Report, we invite you to call 1-888-775-3276.

Or contact:

Saskatchewan Learning
Communications Branch
1st Floor, 2220 College Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 4V9

You can also visit the Department's website at www.learning.gov.sk.ca to download a copy of the report. On the website you will also find more information about the Department's programs and services, as well as links to sector partners.

Appendix A – Organizational Chart



Appendix B – Legislation

C-7.3	Child Care Act (shared responsibility with Community Resources)
C7.3 Reg 2	Child Care Regulations, 2001
E-0.2	Education Act, 1995
E-0,2	Loi de 1995 sur d'education
E-0.1 Reg 1	Education Regulations, 1986
E-0.1 Reg 11	Independent School Regulations
E-0.1 Reg 15	Home-based Education Program Regulations
E-0.1 Reg 18	School Division Tax Loss Compensation Fund Administration Regulations
E-0.1 Reg 9	Board of Education Public Accounts Regulations
E-0.2 Reg 11	Teacher Certification and Classification Regulations, 2002
E-0.2 Reg 16	2005-06 School Grant Regulations
E-0.2 Reg 4	Conseil scolaire Fransaskois Election Regulations
E-0.2 Reg 6	Electronic Meeting Procedures Regulations
E-4.1	Education Property Tax Credit Act
E-4.1 Reg 1	Education Property Tax Credit Regulations
G-5.1	Government Organization Act
G-5.1 Reg 125	Department of Learning Regulations, 2006 (No. 2)
L-9.02	League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents Act, 1991
L-14.01	Libraries Co-operation Act
L-14.01 Reg 1	Libraries Co-operation Honoraria Regulations
P-39.2	Public Libraries Act, 1996
P-39.2 Reg 1	Public Libraries Regulations, 1996
R-11.1	Registered Music Teachers Act, 2002
S-8.2	Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials Act, 2004
T-6.1	Teachers' Dental Plan Act
T-7	Teachers' Federation Act, 2006
T-8	Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act
T-8 Reg 1	Teacher's Life Insurance Regulations
T-9.1	Teachers' Superannuation and Disability Benefits Act
T-9 Reg 1	Teachers' Superannuation and Disability Benefits Regulation

The Teachers' 1990-91 Collective Agreement Implementation Act